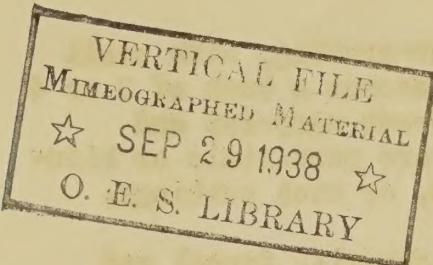


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Extension Service,  
U. S. Dept. Agr.

## HERBS FOR VARIETY AND ACCENT

By  
Miriam Birdseye  
Extension Nutritionist

Using herbs in cooking is an art, not a science. This means that although some guidance is needed, the most important factors are the interest, imagination, and experimentation of the woman who sees in cooking primarily adventure rather than a daily chore.

Herbs are more delicious in the fresh state, but it is possible to get excellent effects with a good quality of the dried product. With care, any woman can raise and dry a variety of herbs for winter use.

The 12 or 15 varieties of herbs most commonly used in cooking belong to only three or four plant families, which means that many of them are closely related. Nevertheless, each has a personality distinct from any other, which one comes to understand only by using it.

Herbs are social beings which gain in interest by being harmoniously blended with other foods and with one another. To develop to the full the possibilities of their use, one really needs to have on hand, separately or in judicious blends, 12 to 15 of the varieties listed below.

A Good Assortment For the Home Herb BedGroup 1. Herbs used for the aromatic oil in their leaves

<u>Very strong</u>	<u>Fairly strong</u>	<u>Delicate</u> (excellent mixers)
Rosemary	Basil, sweet	
Sage	Balm, lemon	
Winter savory	Mint	Summer savory
*****	Marjoram, sweet and pot	
	Thyme, French, English, lemon	*****
	*****	
	Dill	Chervil
	Fennel	Parsley
	-----	-----
	Tarragon	Chives

All herbs listed above the asterisks belong to the family of the Labiateae or lip-flowers, beloved of bees, whose best known representatives in farm gardens are mint and sage. All the Labiateae have square stems and simple, opposite leaves. Their flowers range from white through orchid, lavender, and rose to purple and blue, and are borne usually several together in rings at the top of the stem.

Thyme, sweet marjoram, and winter savory are low-growing, with small leaves and tiny flowers. In mild climates, rosemary becomes a bush of 3 or 4 feet. Most other Labiateae grow  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet high. Sweet marjoram and summer savory are annuals. The other Labiateae listed are perennials or biennials. They may be raised either from seeds, cuttings, or root cuttings.

Of the herbs listed below the asterisks, dill, chervil, fennel and parsley belong to the family of Umbelliferae, and carry their flowers in flat heads like the wild carrot. Their leaves are finely divided or lacy, their flower stalks are hollow, and their flowers are white, orchid, or greenish yellow. They are grown from seed, and have tap-roots so they do not bear transplanting. They grow from 2 to 4 feet high. Except fennel, they are annuals or biennials. Chervil, which is like a delicate parsley in appearance, with a flavor suggesting anise, requires half-shade from Washington south, and does best from seed sown in spring and early fall. If allowed to go to seed, it dies.

Tarragon is hard to grow in some soils, and does not set seed in this climate. It is propagated by root division. Better buy it dried.

Chives, the most delicate member of the onion family, may be grown either from seed or by dividing the roots. Chives may need some shade the first year in the South. The second year they form large clumps with heads of striking orchid-colored blossoms.

Group 2. Herbs used for the aromatic oil in their seeds:

Anise	Dill
Caraway	Fennel
Coriander	

All these belong to the Umbelliferae, described above. The seeds are sometimes crushed before using.

#### Some Pointers on Using Herbs in Cooking

Expert cooks, abroad and at home, suggest the following rules for using herbs effectively:

1. Use sparingly - the aromatic oils are very strong.
2. Don't use herbs in every dish - use them for variety and accent only.
3. Blend judiciously for different purposes:  
Have a leading flavor and combine from two to three or four less-pronounced flavors with it. Never emphasize more than one of the very strong herbs in a blend, except perhaps for sausage. Blends should be so subtle that only the expert can tell which herbs are used.
4. Chop savory leaves very fine. For some purposes, grind them in a mortar. The more the cut surface is exposed, the more completely the aromatic oil can be absorbed.

5. Blending or heating with butter or other fats is the best way to draw out and extend the flavor of the aromatic oils.
6. Soaking dried herbs in a few drops of water or lemon juice for 15 minutes before using helps to bring out the flavor.
7. For soups and gravies, tie sprigs of fresh herbs in tiny bunches (bouquets) or place ground herbs in cheesecloth bags, and remove them after they have served their purpose. Herbs left too long in soups or gravies may develop unpleasantly strong flavors. They are best added not too long before the cooking is finished.

#### How To Combine Herbs With Foods

Most herbs have special affinities. Here are some of them:

1. Anise . . . leaves - salads, especially apple.  
seeds - cookies, candy.
2. Balm, lemon  
leaves - steep for delicate aromatic drink or add to hot or cold tea with lemon and sugar.
3. Basil . . . leaves - tomatoes, cucumbers, green salads, eggs.
4. Caraway . . seeds - boiled with potatoes in jackets, potato salad, cream or cottage cheese, cookies. Partly matured caraway seeds are delicious to munch.
5. Chervil . . leaves - salads and salad dressings, soups, omelet; chief ingredient in what the French call "fines herbes."
6. Chives . . leaves - more delicate than onion; blends with any herb mixture; indispensable in salads and omelets.
7. Coriander. seeds - cookies, French dressing.
8. Dill . . . leaves  
seeds - broiled or fried meats and fish, fish sauces, chicken gravy.  
- pickles.
9. Fennel . . leaves  
stems - fish, salads;  
- blanched stems of Florence fennel eaten raw like celery, added to salads, or braised in meat stocks.
10. Marjoram, sweet  
or "knotted"  
leaves - cold meat sandwiches, meat and poultry stuffings and gravies, soups;  
"Pot marjoram" has a stronger flavor than sweet marjoram, but the same uses.
11. Mint . . . leaves - lamb, peas, cream of pea soup, tea, fruit drinks.
12. Rosemary . leaves - use sparingly for special accent with cream soups made of leafy greens, poultry stews, sauces.  
Blend chopped parsley and a little rosemary with sweet butter and spread under the skin of breasts and legs of roasting chickens.
13. Sage . . . leaves - use sparingly with onion for stuffing pork, ducks and geese; pound fresh leaves and blend with cottage cheese and cream cheese. Steep for tea, for headaches and fevers.

14. Summer savory - string beans, soups, stuffings and sauces for veal and leaves poultry, egg dishes and salads.
15. Tarragon leaves - leading accent in green salads, salad dressings, salad vinegars, egg dishes, fish sauces, sauce tartare.
16. Thyme . .leaves - meat and poultry stuffings and gravies, soups and egg dishes.
17. Winter savory - important accent in chicken and turkey stuffing, sausage leaves and some egg dishes. Combine with parsley and onion juice for French omelets in winter.

Some General References on Growing Herbs and Using Them  
in Cooking

Gardening with Herbs for Flavor and Fragrance: Helen Morgenthau Fox. Macmillan Co., N. Y., 1933. 334 pp., illus.

Includes recipes standardized by Bertha M. Shapleigh of Teachers College, New York, and much data on history and cultivation.

Culinary Herbs and Condiments: Mrs. Maud Grieve, Harcourt, Brace & Co., Inc., New York, 1934. 209 pp.

Brief comprehensive manual on history, cultivation, usage.  
Recipes for dishes and beverages.

Herbs in Cooking: Compiled by Grace Tabor, Editor, Garden Department, Woman's Home Companion. New York.

General Directions and Interesting Recipes. 12 pp. Illustrated.

Herbs - Their Culture and Use: Charlotte P. Brooks and Abbie Graham. Circular 83, Vermont Agricultural Extension Service, Burlington. May 1935. 28 pp. Illustrated.

Contains directions for culture, drying, and curing; notes on romance and history, and recipes. A real manual for the home gardener.

The Herb Journal: Published monthly, beginning October 1936, by Rosetta E. Clarkson, 412 Gulf Street, Milford, Conn.

Successive numbers give lists of references, sources of seeds, plants, and herb products, recipes, uses of 20 culinary herbs, garden plans, cultural suggestions, color and foliage combinations, glimpses of past usage. No subscription charge for current numbers.

Household Uses for Herbs: The League of New Hampshire Arts and Crafts, Concord. 16 pp. 1935. Uses and recipes.